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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: NORTH KOREA, U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage July 25-27 on the 2009 World Games, which closed successfully in Kaohsiung on Sunday; on President Ma Ying-jeou's election as KMT Chairman Sunday; and on the developments in cross-Straits relations. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" discussed North Korea and said the "normalization of relations" between Washington and Pyongyang means nothing but political jargon when the two share no mutual trust at all. With regard to U.S.-China-Taiwan relations, an editorial in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" welcomed U.S. President Barack Obama's nomination of Republican Utah Governor Jon Huntsman as the next U.S. ambassador to China. The editorial expressed hopes that that Huntsman, who said he is "personally invested in the peaceful resolution of cross-Straits relations," will be prepared to "make a candid assessment on cross-Straits pacts between the Communists and the KMT government that are potentially injurious" to Taiwan. End summary.

## ¶2. North Korea

"'Normalization of Relations' between the United States and North Korea Is Merely Political Jargon"

"The [recent annual] meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers originally had no intention to discuss the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, because the peninsula is not in the Southeast Asian region and the ASEAN nations can do nothing about it. But U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton talked animatedly about the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue [during the ASEAN annual meeting], which even triggered mutual verbal abuse between her and Pyongyang. The so-called [proposed] 'comprehensive package' has become useless before it was fully exposed. ...

"The United States regards 'normalization of relations' as a kind of reward, or a kind of charity. If Pyongyang were able to destroy totally its existing nuclear missiles and facilities and promise that it would no longer develop such weapons, Washington would then establish diplomatic ties with it. But it will be a separate issue as to how the relations [between the two nations] are faring after they have diplomatic ties. Just take a look at the fact that the United States had already removed Pyongyang from its blacklist of 'state sponsors of terrorism,' but then Congress suggested that Pyongyang be included in the list again. Isn't it possible that [the two countries] can sever their relations after they have established formal diplomatic ties? Pyongyang will not be so stupid as to be fooled [by Washington].

"Pyongyang, [on the other hand,] views normalization of its relations [with Washington] as a beginning to resolve their bilateral disputes. Once the United States and North Korea establish formal diplomatic ties, they can resolve the nuclear issue via bilateral talks, bypassing the 'Six Party talks.' Pyongyang will then determine its next step depending on the domestic political climate of the United States. In that vein, once both sides fail to reach any agreement and sever diplomatic ties, Pyongyang will have nothing to lose. But Washington [is too smart]

to swallow the bait, either. As a result, given the circumstances when there is no mutual trust between the two countries, 'normalization of relations' truly has little value other than being merely political jargon."

### 13. U.S.-China-Taiwan Relations

#### "A Likely Envoy with a Clear Message"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (7/25):

"The likely appointment of Republican Utah Governor Jon Huntsman as the next US ambassador to China is an intriguing development, and certainly welcome as far as Taiwan is concerned. "Amid increasingly aggressive comments by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Pyongyang's brinkmanship, Huntsman's emergence as the probable next envoy to China sends another signal that the US is beginning to reassert itself and make up for a period of Asia policy neglect that emboldened not only North Korea and Myanmar but also Chinese militarism. ...

"For people in Taiwan who support a democratic state anchored in principles of self-determination, the importance of the issue should not be overstated. It is up to the pro-independence side of politics to continue communicating with the Americans through the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and through channels in the US. This is especially important now that AIT Director Stephen Young is ending his term. It is essential that his replacement receive a more professional and cordial reception than awaited Douglas Paal, whose poor relationship with the then-Democratic Progressive Party government represented a modern-day nadir in Taiwan-US relations.

"The pro-China administration of President Ma Ying-jeou, however, may feel a little uneasy at the thought of Huntsman, a former Taiwan-based Mormon evangelist, being 'personally invested in the peaceful resolution of cross-strait differences, in a way that respects the wishes of the people on both Taiwan and the mainland,' as he told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday. Huntsman will be all too aware of the Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) grim past, and his background as a politician and his personal characteristics point to a straight shooter, a man willing to live up to his promise of delivering a 'hard-headed realist' approach to US-China ties. It is to be hoped that, notwithstanding the inevitable softening of language that comes with diplomatic postings, Huntsman will be prepared to make a candid assessment on cross-strait pacts between the Communists and the KMT government that are potentially injurious to Taiwanese."

WANG